

NSC BRIEFING

12 June 1957

SATELLITES REACT TO CHINESE COMMUNIST DOCTRINAL PRONOUNCEMENTS

I. Just when the Soviets were having some success in repressing the "dangerous" ideas of Communist liberals in the orthodox Satellites, Chinese Communist ideology--some of which appears to differ significantly from Soviet ideology--may have recently kicked off a new round of intellectual ferment.

A. The new Chinese concepts responsible for this are, basically:

1. "Let all flowers bloom," i.e., let all ideas be presented and the bad ones (non-Marxist) will die a natural death unless they are "enemy" inspired.
2. Communist leaders are fallible and there are contradictions between the masses and the leaders in socialist and Communist states.

B. The Chinese Communists claim that some of these concepts--all advanced during the past year--supersede some of the earlier theories of Lenin, and they imply that their theories are applicable to all Communist countries.

C. The Poles say the Chinese doctrines are "pregnant with significance" and should serve as a "starting point for discussion on an international scale."

1. The Gomulka regime sees in the Chinese views support for its own ideas about socialism and independence, claiming that Chinese "socialist" experience is as valuable as Soviet. It recently established a Polish-Chinese Friendship Society, the first such organization in Eastern Europe,

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D. In Czechoslovakia, a Slovak literary journal in mid-May indirectly accused the Slovak Communist Party of dogmatism and other sins; this attack masqueraded as a discussion of Chinese attitudes toward art and literature.

E. We have not as yet seen similar open attacks in the other Satellites, but we feel quite certain that there has been a great deal of private discussion of the Chinese doctrines and that this will break into print unless the regimes move fast to head it off.

1. According to a Yugoslav official in Bucharest, young Communists in Rumania are already upset that their party has not fully discussed the Chinese doctrines.

II. So far, the USSR and all of the hard-line Soviet Bloc regimes except Hungary have been reluctant to discuss the Chinese theories.

A. Differences in ideology between Moscow and Peiping are in a sensitive area because neither party wishes to see any kind of open dispute.

B. The USSR and its Satellite Hungary, however, have said enough to indicate what the standard Soviet Bloc line will become if a more open stand is taken.

1. Khrushchev in his American television interview on 2 June said that some of Mao's "new ideas" (his words) might be applicable to China but not to the USSR. In answer to a follow-up question, he also said that there are no contradictions between the leaders and the masses in the USSR. Moscow deleted this second statement from the radio and press transcript of the interview--a further

2. Earlier, a party spokesman in Hungary claimed that the Chinese themselves would not consider their own doctrines applicable to Hungary.

III. In spite of these orthodox rumblings, we feel that dissension among the liberal Communists is apt to grow and to become more overt as long as the Poles publicize their interpretation of the Chinese theories without any Chinese repudiation.

A. The liberally-inclined Eastern European Communist had high hopes for victory until the failure of liberalism in Hungary last fall. Now his hopes may be high again, because he sees in the Chinese Communists a new source of support. He may be wrong, but, probably only the Chinese themselves can convince him of this.